[For additional information about ethos, see category 116, pp. 249-315.]

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853 Infants are breast fed, occasionally receiving supplementary bottles. No rationalization for the extra feeding could be obtained. A large variety of bottles are used for this purpose including, besides the regular nursing variety, beer bottles and even small perfume bottles with a mouth wide enough to fit the rubber nipples locally purchased.

Suckling is a casual process of which the woman exhibits little concern. A young infant is nursed outdoors, in traders' stores, and in church whenever it frets or cries. Whereas a baby nurses as it reclines in the mother's lap, an older child, who can hold itself erect, often suckles as it perches on the mother's knee while the latter is eating, idling, or even carrying out such tasks as scraping moosehide (Plate 8, A). No fondling of babies was observed during the nursing situation. An older child may signal its desire to nurse by touching the mother's breast or, if it can crawl or toddle, pull aside the nursing mother's loosely fastened dress. It is recognized that a mother's milk is affected by her diet. Most often, particularly for a small infant, the supplementary bottle is held by the mother, but sometimes it is tilted on the baby's body supported by a light pillow or folded blanket. The contents of a bottle are warmed for a young baby.

862 Weaning from the breast generally occurs before two years, but some children nurse until they are three years old. Earlier weaning occurs when a baby is displaced by the birth of a sibling. However even young babies are given a solid piece of meat or fat to suck, and the amount of solid food gradually assumes a larger place in the baby's diet as weaning approaches. During weaning, milk continues to be served in both the bottle and cup. Crying for the breast leads the mother to pick up the baby and carry it, but if this does not lead to soothing, nursing is permitted. An older child who remains persistent in his attempts to nurse may be mildly criticized and teased about his infantile habits. Pacifiers are also used in weaning. Weaning is not abrupt and most children appear satisfied to accept the bottle as a substitute for the breast.

854 181 Kaska society is infant centered. This is brought out in the ready affection and attention devoted to babies. It is also illustrated by the fact that in this society it is not an older sibling who cares for the infant while the mother does the housework. Rather the reverse holds true; a woman with a nearly adolescent daughter has little to do but take care of a young baby. Often even the lap baby is left to the care of the older sibling, while the mother devotes all her time to the infant. Ideally children are desired and, unless there are too many of the same sex, there is no preference for either boys or girls.

854 Bodily care of the infant is manifested in diapering, washing, clothing, and packing. Diaper cloths are pieces of flannel of various sizes. About seven or ten layers of such material are laid out and the child placed in the center. These cloths are then passed between the baby's legs and pinned at the sides. Sometimes a layer of dry moss is placed in the center of a single piece of material to aid in absorbing the infant's excreta. Diaper cloths are changed when the outermost layer becomes damp. In addition to these cloths, the neonate wears an undershirt and dress, blouse, or rompers. He is generally closely bundled in a clean blanket which is snugly pinned around the body so that the legs lie straight together. In warm weather the hands are exposed (Plate 4, C). While the infant sleeps, the blanket is loosely thrown over his face. With this binding the child is placed in the baby pack and carried on the mother's back. After a few months, blanketing is replaced by rompers, overalls or a

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182 expression of hostility against the wife's lover and there is no evidence of a woman actually fighting her husband's mistress, even though this threat is feared.

182 [186] As far as the stability of the society is concerned, the atomism characterizing social relations is related to the fact that there is little discrimination directed toward groups like *métis* or bastards. Foreigners, particularly the Tahltan, are warmly disliked and differentially treated but are, of course, by definition not members of the in group. This raises the significant point that the stability of Kaska society cannot be accredited to the mutual identification of the group's members, since even within a tribe the degree of such identification is slight. Rather we must explain Kaska morale atomistically as resting on the feeling that life in the group is congenial for the individual because it offers him an adequate opportunity to carry on interpersonal relations in the manner for which his personality has been conditioned. The satisfactions afforded by the technical culture, despite the fact that they have been importantly modified by acculturation, are still congruent with the patterns of interpersonal adjustment demanded as a consequence of the socialization process. Such satisfactions, therefore, are subjectively greater than any that would be afforded by life outside the society. Boys who have spent a brief term in boarding school may enjoy the stimulation of outside places, but apparently they are not attracted to the forms of interpersonal organization present in the white society. Thus they are not attracted to the employer-employee relationship even as this occurs in Lower Post. Nevertheless, it may be suggested that the hiatus between the increased responsibilities introduced with contemporary economic life, the increased effort that must be invested in trapping, and the ideas of futurity which are demanded as part of the trapping economy all contrive to undermine some portion of the Indians' morale. This is especially true because of the fact that socialization procedures have not become modified to fit the individual for participation in the new technical culture that is evolving. How effectively this discontinuity will be solved is a question for future research.

Another important threat to morale comes from the activities of the government agents whose behavior is totally at variance with the key forces of the social structure. Authority, direction, and supervision are producing considerable uneasiness in the Indians since effective flight is difficult. Significantly, in 1945, a number of men promised that the following year they would not spend the summer in Lower Post but would camp near the Highway crossing or on the east bank of the Dease River out of reach of the police.

● 181 182 Summing up, Kaska social behavior and attitudes may be described as adequately providing for the maintenance of deferent human relationships within the group, although certain inconsistent points, particularly in the spheres of property and personality development, introduce stresses in interpersonal relations. Despite these stresses and, in some cases, because of their deferent handling, conflicts within the group are not so severe as to promote instability, although the pressure of an organized authoritarian white society is considerably lowering morale by undermining the satisfactions which the Kaska have been accustomed to find in their atomistic social setting.

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805 is made to keep track of the date. Alongside the use of this calendrical system, attention is still paid to dividing the year by moons. Instead of following the aboriginal system of referring to each new moon by a descriptive word or phrase (as, for example, "Moose moon" to designate the month when moose are fat), an effort is now made to correlate the moon with the western calendar system. This leads to some confusion. Thus the new moon around August 12, 1945 was referred to as "August moon" by one man but as "September moon" by another. However, opinion generally identifies the moon with the name of the following month. The Indians have kept track of the years only since about 1914. "Before we don't know years," Old Man explained. It may be added that since then, the Indian's memory for years is also not too reliable. As a result of the earlier ignorance of years, few older informants are certain of their ages. Some attempt has been made by the Indian Agents to determine ages by reference to the person's development at the time of the Klondike gold rush in 1898 or the outbreak of the European war in 1914.

The seasons are not precisely correlated with the calendar months in the thinking of the people and such "natural" divisions of the year hold considerable popular interest. The first dry snow, occurring in late October, is the beginning of winter. Spring comes when the crust of the snow begins to melt and the ice goes out in the rivers. Summer is the subsequent, relatively brief period of hot days, while fall follows when the deciduous trees begin to lose their color. Fall is also the time when game is fat and the bull moose begins, or is expected to begin, to run. All these phenomena are looked for and their appearance is associated with important changes in cultural activities.

LORE AND LEARNING

● [181] 773 177 539 Kaska culture is characterized by little speculative or abstract thought. Aboriginal myths represent the limit of cosmological speculation and, in some cases, have become fused with western religious ideas. This may be illustrated by the creation myth obtained from Nitla.

The world was made by Jesus. At first there was a flood of salt water and only the sky was above the deep. Jesus then told the rat to plunge into the water and bring up some ground. The rat tried but "couldn't make it." The water was too deep and he died. Then Jesus sent a small duck (a species with a distinctive head and a cry like "rrrrrr")[1] down under the water to get ground. "He catch the ground. He come up, let him go. Ground soon grow and make big and bigger." The earth grew from the size of a little island. Jesus then sent a wolf down to see how big the ground was getting. The wolf began to run around the island but never came back. "Too big that ground. The wolf become gone." Everything in the world originated from Jesus.

"Jesus, he make Injun. No Injun first time. Jesus think about it. Make ground, willows, anything grow. No hill, nothing. Just like dirt the ground. He make lots of birds; leave 'em anyplace. Birds sit down and sing. This ground alive. Birds live and grow." Then Jesus made the whitefish, trout, grayling, and other fish. They were intended as food on which the Indian could maintain himself. Jesus also created the moose and caribou. "These Injun grub. If man lucky he get this grub; if hard luck maybe he lost his game."

Then Jesus created the Indian. The first man was made out of mud and ashes, Jesus tracing the human figure in the soil—"head, legs, arms, hair, eye, anything." Jesus left the image and it was like a man asleep. When Jesus spoke to the figure, however, it couldn't answer. It couldn't

[1] This would seem to be one of the crested species of duck.

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breathe. "He think about it." Then Jesus brought a small bird and threw it into the clay mouth of the image. Again Jesus spoke to the man and this time the figure replied with speech. "He talk damn good." 773 539 177

Jesus thought about what He had done. He decided that He ought to make a girl for this man. Giving the man some "lunch," Jesus told him to go to sleep. Then cutting into the man Jesus removed a left rib—the last rib. He put this under the blanket next to the man. When the man awoke a woman was sleeping alongside of him. Jesus told the man to "keep" the girl. He told the couple to raise children. When the man and woman died, Jesus said, the children would marry and they would have children and so there would always be people in the world.

Aboriginal elements are more sharply delineated in the myth of the origin of the sun and moon,[8] which was obtained from the same informant.

At first there was no light, just perpetual darkness. The sun and moon had a boss and were kept in a cabin where they furnished never failing light. The keeper of these bodies had a wife, who had a daughter. This girl drank water in which there was some dirt. She was unsuccessful in purifying the water and as a result of swallowing the dirt conceived and gave birth to a boy. The boy "grow smart quick." When he was able to walk around he began to cry and demanded the moon to play with. His grandfather assented and gave the moon to the child. The boy rolled the moon back and forth in the cabin until it accidentally rolled out the door and away. From then on moonlight appeared. 773 539

The next day the little boy began to cry for the sun. The grandfather heard him and exclaimed: "I'm tired of hearing that crying. Give it to him." So the mother gave the child the sun as a plaything. The boy rolled the sun back and forth until it too rolled away. Now the family found itself in darkness. They went to sleep. In the morning upon awakening they found daylight everywhere. "Good now. No more hard time."

Although lacking a comprehensive sample of Kaska speculation, we may nevertheless provisionally seek to classify their reflective thought. Ontologically the people are, of course, supernaturalistic in their conceptual perspective. That is, they tend to refer ultimate explanations of being to a principle which is beyond nature. Today this being is generally identified as an anthropomorphic God. It is not surprising to find this ontological theory associated with the metaphysical duality of mind and matter. Such dualism is evident in the notion that a person's thoughts can influence the capture of game and fur because of a power which is continuous with man's mind and also controls the animal world. Dualism also manifests itself in the idea of divination, in the ethical conceptions of free will and predestination, and in the belief that human life depends on the correlated functioning of body and soul. Explicitly, of course, the notion of metaphysical duality has never been formalized in Kaska philosophy. 181 812

One characteristic of epistemological thinking stands out clearly, the relative nature of truth. The Indian does not regard his thinking in absolutist, or universal, terms of validity. "That's what Injun believe," Old Man would say, implying the realization that white and other people have conceptual systems which differ from that held by the Kaska. Knowledge to the Indian is derived from experience and tradition. Since not all peoples have the 812 829

[8] The same tale occurs among the Kutchin and also the Tlingit. See Chapman, *Notes on the Tinneh Tribe of Arctic*, Alaska (1907), 8–10; Pinart, *Notes sur les Koloches* (1872), 797–798. [171]

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managed. For an assertive and basically confident people these problems would perhaps not have been too catastrophic. Kaska resourcefulness, however, is limited to relatively familiar situations or those which do not require a prodigious expenditure of energy and too severe a disruption of normal routines. In novel critical situations the Indian reveals a tendency to passivity and procrastination. These behaviors, totally inadequate as defenses in the acculturation situation, simply aggravated adaptive crises when they were applied to hunting, illness, and trapping. The inevitable result was the arousal of secondary frustration and anxiety.

It was this anxiety, leading to interpersonal difficulties and hostility (which the Kaska are unable to express directly) which was the condition predisposing the society to a favorable reception of witch-fear. Sickness, always a conflict situation for a people dependent on mobility to survive, was the area in which the introduced pattern became readily integrated. Witch-fear solved the emotional problems of frustration and anxiety by offering a channel for the discharge of their derived hostility.

Although this was the general predisposing condition facilitating the reception of witchcraft, certain structural congruities to witchcraft must not be overlooked.[21] Without an awareness of the possibility of effecting malevolence sympathetically or contagiously, such as existed in the former belief in sorcery, witchcraft would have had greater difficulty in taking hold. Torture also had a place in the aboriginal way of life, enemy captives taken in intertribal warfare having been even more callously treated than were suspected witches. Finally the social structure of the group must be regarded as having been functionally related to the introduced attitudes by making it possible for suspicion and fear to exist between even proximate relatives and neighbors.

Kaska society has always been marked by extreme atomism with a minimum of social identification extending beyond the family. Even within the family authority was weak but deference highly emphasized. Cooperation was rare and always on an individualistic and voluntary basis. The largest and best definable unit of social structure beyond the family was the mobile band having the nuclear family as the center around which were grouped grandparents, sons-in-law and, occasionally, other relatives. Such bands were sociologically cemented by the emotional bonds of primary kinship relations. Beyond these bonds affinal kinship, personal friendship, congeniality, and common membership in an exogamous moiety[22] operated to maintain social relations, but such

[21] We here use "structural" in somewhat the same sense that Kluckhohn has spoken of "structural analysis" as "an investigation of 'functional dependencies' " or "the interrelation of parts" of a culture, but excluding those psychological factors which are commonly referred to "personality." This is functionalism in Radcliffe-Brown's rather than Malinowski's sense of the term. (Kluckhohn, 1944, p. 45; Radcliffe-Brown, 1946.)

[22] Dual organization did not extend to the eastern Nelson Indians and probably not to the Kaska-Tutsa.

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ties were weak and unformalized. When a band through marriage secured members of another dialect division (i.e., tribe) the affinal kinship ties were apt to be riddled by considerable distrust. Even today relations between dialect groups are apt to be strained although considerable marriage has taken place between them. Thus on its peripheries the band was extremely unstable and possessed few mechanisms for cementing relationships with other bands. Between such units only more distant blood and affinal kinship ties operated, and here the emotional factor needed to reinforce kinship ties in a society where interpersonal relations are not strictly formalized was even more minimal. Covert interpersonal hostility was congruent to and almost inevitable in such a social structure wherein the individual literally felt he could depend on nobody but himself and in which mistrust rapidly mounted beyond the nuclear family. Obviously, therefore, relatives and neighbors often failed to inspire confidence or security and numerous possibilities for suspicion of malevolence were available. In the absence of any organized chieftainship such antagonisms were primarily subject to individual control in accordance with the ideals of the society.

This analysis has not yet directly explained one important feature of Kaska witch-fear. Why was suspicion of witchcraft so often directed against children? In part the answer may lie in the fact that adults often circumvented accusations by placing the blame for alleged bewitchment on defenseless children. A psychological explanation underlying such behavior can be found in the fact that the Kaska's timidity in interpersonal relations and the correlated deference patterning manifest adult relations made it undesirable to arouse direct hostility.[20] Children, therefore, were safer targets for accusations. Finally we must look to the society's attitudes toward children. The inhibition of demonstrative affection to children has already been pointed out and would seem to point to ambivalence as regards children. An interpretation of conflicting attitudes toward offspring is strengthened by the evidence that some women do not want children and this is related to repressions of masculine striving in some female members of the contemporary society. There are more socially patterned techniques for inducing sterility and contraception than there are means of promoting fecundity. It becomes conceivable, therefore, that a woman who was emotionally withdrawn and unconsciously ambivalent in her attitude toward children could assist in the torture of her own or a relative's child. Emotional rejection, it must be pointed out, is not correlated with conscious hostility toward children and of course not all parents demonstrated hostility to children. Many greatly feared the hysterical outbreaks of witch-fear and witch-hunting and sought to protect their families by removing them from the area.

[20] Kluckhohn has found fear of witchcraft among the Navaho to be associated with only a slight incidence of overt interpersonal aggression. (Kluckhohn, 1944, p. 53.)